

doors, are relieved of all the fatigue, loss of time, and inconvenience of going up and down stairs in passing from room to room; while the aforesaid towers of Babel contain but two or three rooms on every floor. The causes which go to induce this increase in the height of London houses are such as cannot well be restrained: with an increasing population comes an increasing demand for accommodation, which inevitably raises the price of building ground; and the increased cost in ground, for houses of the same superficial area, or class, prompts the putting as many floors under the same roof as reason can be induced to sanction.

But we have only to imagine this principle pursued under an increased pressure of the like circumstances, to see that it is erroneous; that it is an evasion of the difficulty; that there are physical limits to the practical propriety of this upward growth, and that another and necessarily a lateral one, must step in to co-operate with and relieve it. When houses such as we have referred to, and of the superior class entitled to the designation of "mansions," happen to be so situated as to appear isolated, they wear a ponderous, forced, *parvenu* aspect, indicative of vulgar wealth and tasteless ostentation.

Enough has been said to show that this growing system needs looking to generally, inasmuch as the height of these houses is often out of proportion to the width of the streets in which they are built: what I have especially in view is, to show the urgent occasion which exists for dwellings of the various smaller classes being erected which shall meet the requirements—firstly, of those who at present of necessity, and not from choice, sublet parts of the houses they hold to others; and, secondly, of those who under similar feelings occupy such parts as sub-tenants. There are now three courses open to the choice of parties who occupy houses in this way; namely, 1. Holding the house as tenant, and being responsible for double the amount of rent and taxes which they can afford; being liable, besides, to obtain no sub-tenant, or to get one who may turn out bad and pay nothing. 2. Taking a part as sub-tenant, at such an amount as they can afford, and incurring the liability to get involved in the pecuniary difficulties of the householder. 3. Submitting to live in a locality inhabited by those having lodgers in every room, in order to occupy a house adapted, in its rent and taxes, to their means. And here is the best evidence of the unsuitableness of the present form of houses for the middling and humbler classes: the lowest grade, while they take the cheapest houses they can find, have still to take such as they cannot afford to keep to themselves, and have to take in lodgers of their own class accordingly: thus, those who could afford to keep such houses to themselves are driven to adopt the same course in self-defence; and so the evil extends upwards,—society takes a false character,—and shaken credit, with a train of other evils, is the consequence; all proceeding from the want of such houses as those which have been erected by way of model, in London, by the Metropolitan Society for Improving the Dwellings of the Labouring Classes; and, in Glasgow, by ex-Lord Provost Lumden,—the former still too large for the humblest classes, but well adapted for artisans earning good wages; the latter coming nearer to the root of the evil.

It might be inferred from what has been stated, that a due provision of houses based upon these models, at rents which should obviate all sub-tenancy of married persons, would be all that was necessary to cure the evils of the system complained of, and restore the several classes of tenants to the classes of houses to which they properly belonged; but such would assuredly not be the case throughout; for the present cheapest class of houses are constructed with a view to their present occupants, not merely as to their style of finishing, but the sizes of their rooms; and are incompatible with the tastes of the class to whom they would revert; and are in general so mean as to disgrace any city having architectural pretensions: the same will apply to

other classes of habitations grading above these.

The window-tax, now doomed, is a burthen from which the poor man was intended to have been exempt,—houses with less than eight windows being made by the statute duty-free; but, from the lodging-house or sub-tenancy system prevailing, through the want of an adequate provision of small dwellings, and large, old fashioned houses being rented on purpose for sub-letting, by persons who make a trade of it, he has been paying window-tax at the same rate as if he were sole occupant of the mansion,—or nearly so; for in order at once to reduce the number and rate leviable, the holder has built up whatever openings he thought could be spared, thus rendering the house, already unwholesome from the number of its inmates, additionally so by the closing of apertures which were originally considered necessary: the larger the tumble-down fabric in which the poor man lived, the higher the ratio in which he paid; for while eight windows paid but 2s. 3d. each, by the time the number rose to 25 they were up to 6s. 9d.; this, however, is happily a burthen now nearly off his shoulders, although he must still in some localities inhabit the great houses referred to.

In the schemes for erecting, in the metropolis, buildings approaching in character to those of Scotland, propounded by persons not possessing a practical knowledge of such as exist, there are usually some features which mar their simplicity, and are calculated to form barriers to their adoption and success: one of these is the proposed appointment of a resident superintendent, to whom the tenants are to become more or less amenable: such a functionary, dressed in his small authority, inferior to those beside whom he is placed as a check, holding in hand the keys of the main entrance, free to be grave, or dubious, or sulky, or impudent, as suits his humour, when opening the portal after the restricted hour, making favourites of those whose fee is the heaviest, may suffice to set a small, otherwise happy, community together by the ears,—having, like the "portier" or "concierge" of Paris, ample opportunity of playing off the small tyranny too common with small officials. In Scotland no such appendage is found necessary, and no such expense has to be spread over the several houses: bells with name-plates at the street-door communicate with the houses on the several floors: the door is opened by means of a chain and handle, like a bell-pull, suspended at each landing; and it shuts with a spring and latch: where there are two houses on the floor, the pull hangs between the two doors, and is common to both houses. Where a person, such as the officer referred to, does happen, under any peculiar circumstances, to have the command of the entrance, I know him to be regarded with dislike; and where his duties are simply of the scavenger kind, to keep the property clean, as he is no ornament, his residence should be apart from it.

We are met, in London and elsewhere, with the proud boast of improvement-projectors, that such and such hot-beds of disease and haunts of iniquity will be laid bare and demolished, and those who infest them driven forth: new well-springs of health will be opened, and new triumphs of art achieved. But is it a step forward, to drive the inhabitants of those teeming settlements into still closer contact? Is it the province of an enlightened legislature only to countenance the ornamental, without seeking to encourage that which happens to be simply useful in such matters? Is it not rather its duty to see that new and healthy abodes are first prepared, before it sanctions the overthrow of such as exist, as a wise parent seeks out a new home for his children before he removes them from the old? The subject, politically, has been too long overlooked; but for its extreme pressure, acting on the minds of benevolent individuals, it would have been now altogether new; no precedents, such as the examples which they have set up, forming ready and practical data to start from.

Architecturally, the introduction of the Scottish system of building into London, not

merely in districts occupied by the labouring population, but in such as are inhabited by the middling classes also, would be attended with important results: the present small, pinched-up houses would be replaced by buildings of a larger and more massive description: the increased importance of each separate story would call for the refinements of moulded architraves, door and window caps, and string-courses; and the crowning cornices and blocking-course could hardly be dispensed with: so that the old and still frequently practised mode of finishing the wall-head with a bit of York paving would be shamed out of the field, and a better taste generally fostered; while the combustible staircase which now, whenever a fire takes place, and draught is admitted, becomes a roaring furnace from the basement upward, would give place to one which would form the best and most natural means of retreat in such calamities,—superseding those ingenious and multifarious contrivances which perplex the imagination of people beneath the Tweed,—the fire escapes.

To relieve your lordship of the perusal of matter proper for ulterior consideration, and save the valuable space of this journal, I refrain for the present from entering into further detail; but, in closing these remarks, would submit to your lordship to consider as to the expediency of procuring an inquiry to be instituted, firstly, how far an innovation such as I have indicated would be desirable in this fast-spreading metropolis; and, secondly, supposing its proving so, whether a governmental furtherance of it, by the furnishing to parties interested the data requisite for their guidance, would be proper.

I have the honour to subscribe myself,
Your lordship's most obedient
humble servant,
JAMES WYLLSON, Architect.
Tachbrook-street, Pimlico.

THE SEVEN PERIODS OF CHURCH ARCHITECTURE.

I SHOULD not have entered into the controversy which has arisen in your pages between Mr. Sharpe and "F. S. A." had not the latter introduced my own name in a manner not consistent with accuracy. "F. S. A." says, "the same division and the same name for it [geometrical] was proposed by Mr. Freeman to the Oxford Architectural Society in 1842. That Society very properly declined to adopt it, on the ground that 'it is impossible to define such a style.'" A statement to the same effect, and so similar that it would seem to have proceeded from the same hand, occurred in the *Archæological Journal*, vol. v. p. 346: "The introduction of a new style, between the Early English and the Decorated, was proposed to the Oxford Architectural Society by Mr. E. A. Freeman in 1842: the same idea has since been taken up by Mr. Paley, and now by Mr. Poole: it is an attractive theory, and we are not surprised at its finding many votaries; but the objection which was made to it on its first proposal still holds good. It is not easy to define such a style," &c.

These statements are both of them entirely unintelligible to me. I certainly never proposed anything of the kind in 1842; and I am not aware that the society has ever either adopted, or "declined to adopt," in any formal manner, any of the suggestions on the same subject which I have made, though not quite in the form supposed by "F. S. A." in more recent years. I do find indeed in the introduction to the "Guide to the Architectural Antiquities in the Neighbourhood of Oxford" these words:—"Some persons have proposed to make another new style of this (the transition from the Early English to the Decorated), under the name of Geometrical Gothic. The same objection applies to this as in the former instance: it is impossible to define such a style." But this introduction bears date, "Oct. 10, 1842;" and as I had then never read any paper at all to the society, and had never taken part in any discussion on this subject, I could not have been one of the "some persons" who made this proposal which the society "declined to adopt,"—that